

Asheville City Council
Planning and Economic Development Committee

2:00 p.m. June 11, 2008
Economic Development Office Conference Room

Minutes

Present: Councilwoman Robin Cape, Chair; Vice-Mayor Jan Davis; Staff: Gary Jackson, Rebecca Falls, Bob Oast, Sasha Vrtunski, Nikki Gunter, Sam Powers, Charlotte Caplan, Vann McNeil

The planning and Economic Development Committee met on June 11, 2008 at 29 Haywood Street at 2:00 p.m. Chair Robin Cape called the meeting to order.

1. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes from the May 14, 2008, meeting were approved as written.

2. Updates

Downtown Master Plan

Sasha Vrtunski, Project Manager for the Downtown Master Plan, presented the update.

To date, the workshops have been successful. Over 200 people were present both on Friday night's session and the Saturday workshop, May 30 and 31. Sunday, June 1, approximately 75-100 people came. Goody Clancy, the consultants, are coming back with a draft on June 12, 2008. They will meet with the Downtown Commission and the Chamber on Friday, June 13, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The whole team will return Monday and Tuesday, July 29-30. There will also be drop in meetings scheduled on topics and strategies, and a big public meeting on Tuesday, July 29 at 6:00pm at the Asheville Civic Center.

The meetings in July were added so that the consultants would have a chance to test out which strategies are acceptable before draft comes out in September. A tentative date of September 18 has been set for a public meeting to review the draft plan. These steps will hopefully facilitate community-wide acceptance of the plan and ultimately its implementation.

Methods and Procedures for Property Disposition

Bob Oast discussed Methods and Procedures for Real Property Disposition.

- Advertise for sealed bids – similar to RFP, advertise and sell to highest bidder
- Negotiate offer of Advertisement and Upset bids – advertise, accept offers, accept upset bids, sell to highest bidder

- Auction – City must advertise
- Exchange of Property – notice stating value of consideration being exchanged. Might not be equal value for the 2 parcels. After notice is given, exchange can be made. Must give notice to public before transaction is contemplated. No requirement of fair market value, and the city is not required to sell. At end of bidding process, the city has the option of rejecting all bids.
- The City can also sell to nonprofit agencies as long as they are engaged in nonprofit activities.

City Owned Property RFP

Sam Powers gave the update.

Eagle and Market Street: The Eagle Market Street Development Corporations is working on plans, and have submitted their financial information to staff. The presentation to City Council on July 8 has been rescheduled for July 22.

Haywood Street: On April 22, Council approved moving forward with negotiations for a draft Development Agreement. Staff will be coming to Council with a draft Development Agreement in August.

Mr. Powers reported that Staff and Councilwoman Cape also attended a meeting with Basilica and McKibbon representatives to discuss the letter that was sent to the Basilica by the Mayor asking for a partnership to include both properties in development of new public space. McKibbon is committed to a “gateway” project.

Parks Maintenance: Last fall, developers were interested in the site; however, the market has changed dramatically. The RFP was extended for 90 days to keep the process open for two development teams that expressed interest in providing the desired workforce housing on the site. MHO has submitted a proposal that would include a mixed income residential village with a small amount (10,000sf) of commercial and community space. They are proposing to develop the north (Hilliard Street) side of the site with 54 units of for sale and rent affordable workforce housing. In its initial proposal MHO is suggesting the 85% of the units will be to families making less than 120% of median income.

Staff is currently evaluating the proposal submitted by MHO and expects to make a staff report to City Council at the July 22nd meeting.

3. New Business

Charlotte Caplan, Community Development Director, introduced her successor, Mr. Vann McNeil.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.